Amend the paragraph at page 13, lines 14 - 19 to read as follows:

With respect to the individual "soft" unit, in the definitions of R^3, x is preferably 2 to 12, more preferably 2 to 6 and most preferably 2; y is preferably 4 to 12, more preferably 4 to 6 and most preferably 6; R^8 is preferably hydrogen; R^9 and R^{10} are preferably identical, more preferably an unbranched C_4-C_{12} alkylene and most preferably an unbranched C_6-C_{12} alkylene; R^{11} is preferably hydrogen and R^{12} is preferably methyl.

Delete the paragraph at page 14, lines 14 - 29.

Amend the paragraph at page 17, lines 18 - 24 to read as follows:

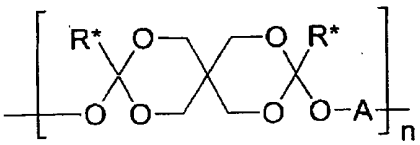
The polyorthoesters may also be prepared by reaction of the diketene acetal with the chosen diol(s) under similar reaction conditions, but in the presence of a "chain stopper" (a reagent that terminates polyorthoester chain formation). Suitable chain stoppers are C_{5-20} alkanols, especially C_{10-20} alkanols. The chain stopper is preferably present in from 1 - 20 mol% based on the diketene acetal. The polyorthoesters thus prepared have lower molecular weights with a lower molecular weight dispersion than those prepared by the reaction of the diketene acetals with only diols.

In the Claims:

Cancel claims 15 and 16, without prejudice.

Amend claims 1, 5 - 8, 12 - 14, 17, and 18 to read as follows:

1. (Amended) A polyorthoester of formula I:



(I)

where:

R* is a C_{1-4} alkyl;

n is an integer of at least 5; and

A is R^1, R^2, R^3, or R^4, where